

Message Text

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ORIGIN INR-07

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TAGS: EG, IS, PINR

SUBJECT: INTSUM 308 - MAY 3, 1977

1. EGYPT. SADAT'S MAY DAY SPEECH IN ALEXANDRIA FOCUSED PRIMARILY ON EGYPT'S ECONOMIC SITUATION, GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS TO REDRESS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS, AND THE ROLE OF EGYPT'S "DEMOCRATIC SOCIALISM" IN FURTHERING EGYPT'S AIMS. ON FOREIGN POLICY MATTERS, HE STRONGLY CHASTISED THE SOVIETS FOR THEIR "THREATS"--CONTAINED IN THE SOVIET NOTE SENT VIA AMMAN--AGAINST EGYPT AND ITS LIBYAN POLICY. THE SOVIET THREAT IN AFRICA WAS ANOTHER THEME. LITTLE WAS MENTIONED ABOUT THE MIDDLE EAST PROBLEM.

2. THE SPEECH WAS A LARGELY UNDISTINGUISHED PERFORMANCE. SADAT'S EXTEMPORANEOUS DELIVERY MAY EXPLAIN THE RAMBLING, DISORGANIZED RESULT, AND THE AUDIENCE OAS TEPITHIN ITS REACTION, ESPECAILLY SINCE SADAT DID NOT MAKE THE TRADITIONAL ANNOUNCEMENT OF SOME BENEFITS FOR WORKERS--

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USUAL-Y THE ONLY SURE WAY TO RAISE CHEERS. GIVEN THE

LACK OF ANY FOREIGN POLICY RELEVATION AND ANY ECONOMIC SWEETENER.THE SPEECH WAS NOTABLE ONLY AS THE LATEST MANIFESTATION OF SADAT'S DISTRUST OF THE SOVIETS. (CONFIDENTIAL)

3. SAUDI ARABIA. AMBASSADOR PORTER COMMENTED THAT SAUDI CROWN PRINCE FAHD WILL LIKELY MAKE JERUSALEM, AND FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CITY IN A FINAL PEACE, AN IMPORTANT ISSUE DURING HIS FORTHCOMING DISCUSSIONS WITH US LEADERS. FAHD'S NEPHEW, PRINCE TURKI, RAISED THIS MATTER WITH AMBASSADOR PORTER, SAYING THAT JERUSALEM WAS PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT TO THE SAUDIS WHO HAVE A SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR IT AS KEEPERS OF THE MUSLIM HOLY PLACES.
(CONFIDENTIAL)

4. ISRAEL. OUR JERUSALEM CONSULATE GENERAL REPORTED THAT ISRAELI POLICE HAD SAFELY DETONATED TWO BOMBS FOUND IN JERUSALEM YESTERDAY. ISRAELI POLICE HAVE KEPT THE MATTER QUIET, APPARENTLY TO AVOID ALARMING THE LARGE NUMBER OF TOURISTS. THIS IS THE SECOND BOMB INCIDENT IN AS MANY WEEKS, AFTER A LULL OF SEVERAL MONTHS.

5. A PLO DELEGATION IS SCHEDULED TO MEET WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF ISRAEL'S ARAB-COMMUNIST RAKAH PARTY IN PRAGUE TOMORROW. THIS WILL BE THE FIRST "DECLARED OFFICIAL MEETING" BETWEEN THESE GROUPS (THEY HAVE MET COVERTLY ON AT LEAST TWO PAST OCCASIONS). IT HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN REPORTED THAT THE MEETING WOULD PROBABLY BE HELD IN BULGARIA. (LIMITED OFFICIAL USE)

6. ME PEACE. MODERATE ARAB LEADERS CONTINUE TO EMPHASIZE THE NEED TO PRESS ON WITH THE PEACE PROCESS. THEY ARE INCREASINGLY RELUCTANT, HOWEVER, TO MAKE WHAT THEY CONSIDER TO BE "FURTHER CONCESSIONS" BECAUSE THEY
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CONSIDER THAT THE ISRAELIS ARE "DRAGGING THEIR FEET." THE ARABS BELIEVE THAT ISRAEL IS RAISING ISSUES SUCH AS PALESTINIAN PARTICIPATION ONLY IN ORDER TO AVOID GENEVA, TO EVADE PAINFUL DECISIONS, AND TO PROVOKE DISSENSION AMONG THE ARABS. THE ARAB LEADERS APPARENTLY CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT SUPPORTING AND PROMOTING CURRENT US PEACE EFFORTS IS THE BEST WAY TO PERSUADE THE ISRAELIS TO BE MORE RECEPTIVE TO WHAT THE ARABS PERCEIVE TO BE THEIR WILLINGNESS TO NEGOTIATE IN GOOD FAITH.

7. ASAD, WHO IS USUALLY THE MOST SKEPTICAL OF THE ARAB CONFRONTATION LEADERS, SEEMS TO BELIEVE IT NECESSARY TO KEEP WORLD PUBLIC OPINION BEHIND PRESIDENT CARTER, WHO, ASAD IS CONVINCED, WILL ULTIMATELY HAVE TO BE THE ONE TO GET ISRAEL TO MOVE. ASAD'S UNDERSTANDING OF US ATTITUDES MAKES HIM OPTIMISTIC THAT WASHINGTON

WOULD COME FORTH WITH SENSIBLE PROPOSALS. IN THIS CASE, HE HOPES THAT THE ISRAELIS WOULD BE OBLIGED TO

GIVE UP DELAYING TACTICS AND ANSWER PRECISE QUESTIONS.

8. WITH REGARD TO THE CURRENT ISRAELI DEMAND FOR REAL PEACE, ASAD THINKS THAT THE ISRAELIS ARE ASKING FOR MORE THAN AN END TO THE STATE OF WAR, AND ARE ASKING FOR A "STATE OF LOVE." HE CONTENDS THAT THERE IS NO WAY THE ARAB DESIRE FOR PEACE COULD BE CONVERTED INTO SUCH AN EMOTIONAL RELATIONSHIP, BUT RATHER THAT CONFIDENCE WOULD FLOW FROM UN SECURITY COUNCIL GUARANTEES, AN END OF BELLIGERENCY, AND TERRITORIAL MEASURES TO REDUCE FEARS OF AGGRESSION.

9. ARAB LEADERS ARE ONCE AGAIN WARNING THAT IF THE GENEVA CONFERENCE IS NOT RECONVENED AND IF A FINAL SETTLEMENT IS NOT ACHIEVED, THE ARABS WILL HAVE TO RESORT TO ARMS. ASAD, SADAT, HUSSEIN AND OTHER LEADERS HAVE EMPHASIZED PUBLICLY IN THE LAST FEW WEEKS THAT THE
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MILITARY OPTION IS A KEY ELEMENT OF ANY APPROACH TO A SETTLEMENT. THEY BELIEVE THAT IF THEY DO NOT HAVE A CREDIBLE MILITARY FORCE, THE ISRAELIS WILL NOT NEGOTIATE IN GOOD FAITH.

10. THE ARABS ARE OBVIOUSLY USING THE THREAT OF WAR TO PROD THE US, AS WELL AS ISRAEL, TO ACCELERATE THE SEARCH FOR A PEACEFUL SOLUTION. IN THIS RESPECT, THE BALANCE OF MILITARY CAPABILITIES FAVORS THE ISRAELIS, AND IT IS UNLIKELY THAT THE ARABS COULD LAUNCH A COORDINATED ATTACK SIMILAR TO THE 1973 WAR. WE BELIEVE, HOWEVER, THAT THE ARABS WOULD NOT RULE OUT A LIMITED MILITARY ACTION SHOULD THE PEACE PROCESS BECOME STALEMATED. (SECRET)
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